



**SEATTLE PARKS
AND RECREATION**

**VOLUNTEER PARK PLAY AREA RENOVATION
MEETING NOTES**

Wednesday June 1, 2011, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Lowell Elementary

Questions

- Clarification – Landscape Architect hired consultant or is the Landscape Architect from Parks? **The project will be designed by Parks Department In-house Sr. Landscape Architect team.**
- Are you doing anything to the restroom? **We will be providing ADA accessibility to the restroom.**
- Are you removing/keeping wading pool? **We are not removing the wading pool.**
- Clarify – what play equipment goes? **All equipment will be removed except for the “bone” sculpture. We will review the possibility of retaining the hillside slides.**

Safety Concerns

- Restrooms are isolated and scary.
- Initial NMF project was difficult to work with the City; many memorials on site; support accessibility (couldn't do that before; like space for younger children; is ADA equipment mostly for older group? **All play equipment must meet ADA.** Stroller access has always been difficult. Will there be equipment for multiple age groups? **Yes, play equipment will be designed for ages 2-5 and ages 5-12.**
- Overhead ladder and track ride is a perfect size. Need equipment to be sized for middle age group – 7-10 year olds (Miller play equipment is too high). Current Volunteer Park play area is sized just right.
- Biggest concern – handrail bar spacing – unsafe for 20 mo. old.
- How to make some areas safer from potential campers, etc.
- Visibility important at kid height.
- Volunteer Park is darker, once children 15-16 years old took over, cause discomfort for little ones & parents.

Schedule:

- Summer construction will be difficult for community. Projects often go longer than planned.
- Can wading pool stay open during next summer? **Construction can't take place during the winter months. We will attempt to schedule construction so that the wading pool can be open for a portion of the summer, though this may not be possible. We will keep the community informed about the schedule.**

Surfacing

- Wood chips vs. rubber – pros & cons.
- Mold is a concern don't like the little rubber balls in the synthetic turf.
- Natural area described in NE corner; dark, scary, outdoor toilet, find condoms there.
- Upgrade surface.
- Bark chips hide undesirable stuff. Kids ingest goose feces.
- Like the new synthetic grass play safety surfacing.
- Is the play area turf as bouncy as the rubber? Is it more expensive to maintain (that would be a concern).
- Rubber – question about type... "poured in place."

Natural Area

- That space is also a nice buffer from street; big boulder is fun!
- Bushes were planted in a maze; plant for low maintenance or budget for that.
- 20 years ago, some people wanted more natural area. Boulder was part of former play area. Would like to expand; possible maze!
- Natural play with rock, etc., would be nice. Bone sculpture makes park unique. Could play off bone sculpture and add fossils.

Play Equipment

- Stanley Park – 1920's fire truck to climb on. (a child requested this)
- Carkeek salmon slide popular and challenging to a variety of ages. It is "out of the box" also like tunnel at Meadowbrook.
 - Counterpoint – my children like traditional play equipment.
- Hillside slides? Big one is fun, can slide down with your children. More swings! Higher are great.
- Metal slides get hot (3 weeks out of the year).
- Water play option, design should echo history of the park.
- The feeling of the larger park should remain.
- The existing color is great.
- Natural colors, natural play area and modern play equipment. Ex: area near cemetery fence is "unknown zone."
- Treehouse would be cool!
- A playhouse, like in Renton – in the middle of sand w/bucket play.
- Madison Park & West Seattle – zip lines; kids love these. Physical and aggressive play.
- Fossils in sand play.
- Another park – Peppi's Playground near Leschi – Older kids love the high structure, catlike, and wonderful. Kids like elevation, high slides. An exit for scared kids is great.
- Creative earth forms – like play mounds in Japan.
- Place for 3 wheels (tricycles) to do laps; like Ercolini Park.
- Sinuous separation between little and big kids play area – Seward Park.
- Separation but seamless design is important.
- Zip line between platforms in trees.
- Discovery Park zip line in trees is great.

- A canopy over the slides to keep cool!
- Merry-go-round (Ercolini); donut merry-go-round (Supernova). Play equipment in motion!
- What happened to seesaws?
- A grass mound by wading area would be great. Kids run up and down.
- Mound is good, less likely for kids to fall off.
- Imaginary play at shelter house would increase use of this area.
- Keep section for toddlers separate from area for older children.

Wading Pool

- Wading pool – what to do with it in fall/winter and autumn. Labyrinth, hopscotch. Make it more attractive. It gets lots of use during the fall and winter but is unattractive.
- Pool surfacing is rough on knees.

Landscaping

- Remove trees? Yes, cool in summer! Selective removal or pruning?
- Love Cal Anderson – parents sit on wall – all watch all the children; creates community –
- Hedge to screen cemetery.

Comfort Station

- Suggest “boys & girls? Vs men & women’s rooms.
- Port-a-potty @ Ercolini – is this possible – want to have a closer bathroom.
- Who owns Metro bathroom? Can it be built bigger; accessible to play area?
 - Bushes are worse here.

Outreach

- Would like to see more community involvement, expected more people here.
- Geocache site
- Madrona Moms
- Capitol Hill Blog
- Federal & Republican
- Yahoo Group
- Facebook

Other Concerns

- Want a place for parents to sit and watch while children run back and forth with better visibility between the wading pool and the play area.
 - Love the bushes, but would rather have open visibility.
- Add lights to the play area, it is dark in the winter. Can we add lights till 8pm?
- Lawn is muddy between the wading pool and play area- It is packed when the wading pool is open!
- Maintenance dollars are minimal; plan for low maintenance or budget for that.
- Community vegetable garden for kids.
- Stop kids from going to 15th.

- Concrete railing and capstone along big slide is dangerous. Children try to slide down from it.
- Need something to break the space from the cemetery. Cemetery can be depressing. Art? Art on fence?
- Whose owns the cemetery fence? Can we put in a gate access to Bruce Lee burial? Kind of cool!
- This area is also cold.
- Ill maintained; neither open nor closed.
- Prickly bushes by platforms – original intended to be tree houses.